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E.O. 12958: N/A

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SUBJECT: ANKARA MEDIA REACTION REPORT

MONDAY, OCTOBER 15, 2007

#### In Today's Papers

##### Edelman, Fried Pay Surprise Visit to Ankara

All papers on Sunday and today cover the "surprise visit" of Assistant Secretary of State Dan Fried and Undersecretary of Defense Eric Edelman on Saturday "to express regret" over the approval of the Armenian genocide resolution and to "cool diplomatic tensions" sparked by the approval of the Armenian genocide resolution by the US House Foreign Affairs Committee. Sunday papers report the US is concerned that the Turkish government might take extreme measures such as the closure of Incirlik Airbase.

On the topic of a possible cross-border operation into Iraq by Turkey, Sunday papers report Fried and Edelman "warned" Ankara that a possible incursion would draw Iran into Iraq, "adding to turmoil in the region." Leftist-nationalist Cumhuriyet writes Monday that Fried and Edelman were sent to Turkey to "calm the Turks" after the committee vote in favor of the resolution, but instead they "threatened" Turkey not to conduct a cross-border operation into northern Iraq. Diplomatic sources said "the visit did not go as well as planned," reports Cumhuriyet.

Papers report Edelman said following talks at the Turkish Foreign Ministry (MFA) the US considers Turkey a strategic partner and aims to maintain ties with Turkey. Edelman said the administration was determined to oppose the bill in Congress.

On the likelihood of a cross-border operation into north of Iraq, Edelman said Turks expressed concerns over recent terrorist developments in the southeastern city of Sirnak, adding the US shared those concerns. Edelman said that in their next stop Baghdad they will convey Turkey's discomfort to the Iraqi authorities, underlining that Turkey's patience is about to run out.

##### Military, Business and Armenian Communities React to Armenian Resolution

All papers report on Sunday and today the chief of the Turkish General Staff (TGS) Yasar Buyukanit warned that ties between Turkey

and the US would never be the same if the House passes the Armenian resolution. Buyukanit said that by passing the resolution the US would be "shooting itself in the foot."

Opposition CHP leader Deniz Baykal said Turkey should close down Incirlik Airbase at least temporarily in reaction to the approval of the resolution by the US House Foreign Affairs Committee. Sunday papers report State Minister Kursad Tuzmen has cancelled his trip to the US this week to participate in a meeting of the Turkish-American Business Council on "Turkey in 2008." Papers also expect Prime Minister to review his plans for visiting the US soon.

Meanwhile, the Patriarch of Turkish Armenians Mesrob Mutafyan said he opposed the resolution approved by the US House Foreign Affairs Committee, and promised to work against the adoption of the resolution by the House. Mutafyan told the press that the resolution has become a tool of domestic policy in the United States.

#### Editorial Commentary: Armenian Resolution

Mehmet Yilmaz writes in the mainstream Hurriyet: "Lately, there are heated discussions in Turkey concerning implementing sanctions against the US if the Armenian genocide resolution passes in Congress. So far, more than 20 countries have approved such a resolution and Turkey's immediate reaction was to hastily impose sanctions against these countries. Unfortunately, there is no evidence that those sanctions helped the situation or that we managed to implement them fully. It is not difficult to understand what the Armenian Diaspora is trying to do; by 2015, which is the 100th anniversary of the so-called Armenian genocide, they want all world parliaments to have issued such a resolution. If we continue pursuing the policy of imposing sanctions, by 2015, we will be completely isolated. However, the best way to counter these

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resolutions is to find a new method, like launching a comprehensive public relations campaign across the world. The reason the Armenian allegations have become so widespread is that Armenians are good at public relations."

Taha Akyol observes in the mainstream Milliyet: "We Turks believe that Turks don't have any friends other than Turks themselves. Declaring the whole world an enemy and following this paranoia and challenging the world will not get Turkey anywhere. While we are discussing our reaction to the US because of the Armenian resolution and also the CBO plans to counter PKK terrorism, we should not allow our emotions to affect us. Instead of acting hastily and emotionally, let us make wise plans with well-calculated results."

#### TGS Acknowledges Turkey Shelled Northern Iraq

All papers report a statement posted by the Turkish General Staff (TGS) on the Internet acknowledges for the first time that the Turkish military bombed PKK bases in northern Iraq on October 12, in retaliation for terrorist attacks coming from northern Iraq. Papers over the weekend and today report extensively on the possibility of a cross-border operation by Turkey, with mainstream Milliyet saying military incursions into northern Iraq will include ground operations against the PKK camps in Haftanin, Sihant, Zap, Hakurk, Gara and Metina, and air strikes targeting the PKK camps in Kandil Mountains.

Papers expect the ruling AKP MPs to give support to the motion despite the opposition of lawmakers from the mainly Kurdish southeast. Saturday's papers report Erdogan as saying Turkey was ready to pay "any price" of an operation into northern Iraq. Erdogan underlined that PKK terrorists killed 30 soldiers during the holy month of Ramadan, and condemned the West for its reluctance to move against the terrorist organization. Today the Council of Ministers is expected to approve a bill for operations against the PKK terrorists in northern Iraq, which will be sent to the parliament Tuesday to be discussed this week.

#### Kaplan on Efforts against DTP, Northern Iraq Incursion

All papers report the Kurdish DTP deputy Hasip Kaplan pointed to the efforts to strip DTP lawmakers of their parliamentary immunity, and threatened to launch huge civilian protests if his party is expelled from parliament. Kaplan, during a visit to Habur border crossing

with Iraq, called on the Turkish government to refrain from incursions into northern Iraq, and warned that operations across the border would lead to a war between nations. Kaplan also sent a message to Kurdish MPs in the ruling AKP, urging them to resign from their party in case it acts in a hostile fashion against the Kurds. "You should not betray your people," Kaplan said.

TV News:  
NTV

#### Domestic News

- The wedding of President Abdullah Gul's daughter was held yesterday in Istanbul under tight security measures.
- A total of 32 people were killed in traffic accidents across Turkey on the last day of the Muslim Eid holiday.
- Prime Minister Erdogan is to visit Izmir together with six cabinet ministers to join a symposium on Izmir's bid to host Expo 2015.

#### International News

- White House Spokesman Tony Fratto said bringing the Armenian resolution to a vote "may do grave harm to US-Turkish relations and to US interests in Europe and the Middle East," and vowed to work to stop the discussion of the document in the US House.
- Israel's attorney general on Sunday ordered a new criminal

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investigation into Prime Minister Olmert.

- Russia's security services claimed over the weekend they had uncovered a plot to assassinate President Putin during his trip to Iran this week.

WILSON